

Appln. No. 10/731,555
Amendment
Reply to Office Action dated December 22, 2004

Docket No. 7202-42-1

REMARKS

The foregoing amendments and these remarks are in response to the Office Action dated December 22, 2004. This amendment is filed with a Request for Retroactive Extension of Time and authorization to charge Deposit Account No. 50-0951 for the appropriate fees.

At the time of the Office Action, claims 1-14 were pending. In the Office Action, claims 1-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Claims 1-2 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b). Claims 1-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). The rejections are discussed in more detail below.

I. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph

Claims 1-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Appropriate amendments are made to claim 1 herein in order to correct the claim deficiency listed in the Office Action. The rejections to claims 3, 4 and 7 are not understood. For example, in relation to the rejection of claim 3, the ring (16, 216, 314) from which the vanes (13, 113, 213, 316) protrude is shown in Figs. 2, 3, 5, 6, 9 and 10, and is relevant to all embodiments. The ring in embodiment 3 is termed an annular element, and is clearly shown. The situation with regard to claim 4 is similar, as the plastic disk previously referred to in the claim is also a ring. With regard to claim 7, Fig. 10 clearly shows the disk-like elements 311 and 318. The wording of the claims is thus believed to be appropriate. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-14 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, is therefore believed to be appropriate.

II. Rejections to the claims based upon Art

Claims 1-2 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,711,657 to Hoffmeier ("Hoffmeier"). Claims 1-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,217,452 to Marion in view of Hoffmeier.

Amended claim 1 now clearly states that the monodirectional impeller comprises a ring and vanes including a central and a peripheral part. Each vane has a center part that is coupled with

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the ring and a peripheral part. The peripheral part of the vanes, when loaded in a wrong direction of rotation, undergoes a deformation greater than any deformation of the central region and consequently the power required for rotation in the wrong direction is greater than the maximum power that can be delivered by the motor and thus the rotation is blocked. Moreover, the elastically deformable peripheral part of the vanes allows the modulation of a change of the motor flow-rate.

Neither Hoffmeier nor Marioni, either singly or in combination, teach or suggest an impeller that includes a clear separation of a central and a peripheral part of the vanes, nor that the peripheral part is elastically deformable. Therefore, claim 1 is believed to be in condition for allowance. The dependent claims are also allowable because of their dependence upon an allowable base claim, and because of the further features recited.

III. Conclusion

Applicants have made every effort to present claims which distinguish over the prior art, and it is thus believed that all claims are in condition for allowance. Nevertheless, Applicants invite the Examiner to call the undersigned if it is believed that a telephonic interview would expedite the prosecution of the application to an allowance. In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and prompt allowance of the pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 5-23-05

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